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Early Learning: About

Early Learning: Learn about the Early Learning initiative.

Early Learning at ED

To improve the educational and social emotional outcomes for young children from birth through 3rd grade, the Department administers programs and promotes initiatives that increase access to high-quality early learning programs, improve the early learning workforce, and build state capacity to support high-quality programs and ensure program effectiveness.

The Office of Innovation and Early Learning (IELP) and the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) have primary responsibility for the department's key early learning investments.

Early Learning Programs

ED funds several programs that specifically focus on young learners (listed belo addition, early learning is integrated in many ED grant programs. Promise

Neighborhoods and Full Service Community Schools grants provide resources for high-need communities to build a continuum of supports and services from prenatal through college and career. The Education Innovation and Research (EIR) program is designed to generate, validate, and expand solutions to persistent educational challenges, including those in early learning. Comprehensive Literacy State Development supports comprehensive literacy from birth through grade 12. Demonstration Grants for Indian Children, Native Hawaiian Education and Alaska Native Education also include projects with a focus on early learning.

Some of the key investments that focus on early learning include:

- **Early Intervention for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities**
  The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C awards formula grants to the 50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Secretary of the Interior, and outlying areas to assist in implementing statewide systems of coordinated, comprehensive, and multidisciplinary interagency programs and in making early intervention services available to children with disabilities, ages birth through 2, and their families.

- **Preschool Grants for Children with Disabilities**
  IDEA Part B, Section 619, the IDEA Preschool Grants program, provides formula grants to states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico to make special education and related services available for children with disabilities, ages 3 through 5.

- **Preschool Development Grant — Birth through Five (PDG B-5)**
  The new Preschool Development Grant—Birth through Five (PDG B-5) program, authorized under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), provides grants to empower state governments to develop, update, and implement a strategic plan to facilitate collaboration and coordination among early childhood care and education programs serving children from birth to age five in a mixed delivery system. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), administers this program in consultation with the U.S. Department of Education.

- **Serving Preschool Children through Title I — Non-Regulatory Guidanc**
  This guidance provides clarity regarding how districts can use Title I, Part A funds to

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implement high-quality preschool programs for eligible children.

- **Ready to Learn Programming**
  Ready to Learn Programming supports the development of educational television and digital media targeted at preschool and early elementary school children and their families. Its general goal is to promote early learning and school readiness, with a particular interest in reaching low-income children.

- **Child Care Access Means Parents in School**
  This program supports the participation of low-income parents in postsecondary education through the provision of campus-based child care services.

- **Innovative Approaches to Literacy**
  The Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) program supports high-quality programs designed to develop and improve literacy skills for children and students from birth through 12th grade in high-need local educational agencies (high-need LEAs) and schools.

- **Arts In Education National Program**
  This program supports national-level, high-quality arts education projects and services for children and youth, with special emphasis on serving students from low-income families and students with disabilities.

Screening & Assessment

ED encourages the implementation of comprehensive early learning assessment systems that organize information about the process and context of young children's learning and also conform with the recommendations of the National Research Council's report on **early childhood assessment**. Below are highlights of ED's efforts to promote appropriate and meaningful assessment in early childhood:

- Office of Special Education Programs' (OSEP) early childhood outcomes work. In 2005 OSEP began requiring State Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education programs to report on child and family outcomes. OSEP made key investments in technical assistance to assist states with this requirement. Vi[illegible] Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center's **(ECTA) outcomes page** to le[illegible]

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more.

- The ***Using Student Achievement Data to Support Instructional Decision Making*** practice guide from IES offers five recommendations to help educators effectively use data to monitor students' academic progress and evaluate instructional practices. The guide recommends that schools set a clear vision for schoolwide data use, develop a data-driven culture, and make data part of an ongoing cycle of instructional improvement. The guide also recommends teaching students how to use their own data to set learning goals.

Newsletter

ED's *Early Learning* newsletter provides monthly updates to subscribers on early learning initiatives led by the Department and our partners across agencies and in the field. Join our mailing list to receive the monthly *Early Learning* newsletter.

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